

What happened to the sparrows?

When I first moved into my house in Holloway in 1977 I considered house sparrows as pests to be grudgingly tolerated, owing to their predatory assaults on my primulas. This view shifted on a sultry summer afternoon when flying ants were appearing faster than I could swat them. A nearby flock of sparrows won me over with their aerobic skills in picking them off with pinpoint accuracy.



Now the number of sparrows in London is falling. There used to be a lot of neglected buildings in this area which provided very adequate nesting sites for the house sparrows. Spiralling house prices have changed that. The rise and rise of the grey squirrel population has resulted in a competition for food also leading to a disastrous decline in house sparrow numbers.

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